MAKE YOURSELVES SAVIOURS OF MEN

Dag Heward-Mills

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Make Yourselves Saviours of Men

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Make Yourselves Saviours of Men
Chapter 2: Where Was the Great Commission Delivered?
Chapter 3: Men Have Become Saviours of Themselves
Chapter 4: The Vision of the Dark and Stormy Ocean
Chapter 5: The Great Commission According to Matthew
Chapter 6: The Great Commission According to Mark
Chapter 7: The Great Commission According to Luke
Chapter 8: The Great Commission According to John
Chapter 9: The Great Commission According to Acts
Chapter 10: The Great Commission According to Timothy
Chapter 11: The Great Commission According to Jude
Chapter 12: The Great Commission According to James
Chapter 13: The Great Commission According to Peter
Chapter 14: The Great Commission According to Revelation

Chapter 1

Make Yourselves Saviours of Men

And SAVIOURS SHALL COME UP on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's.

Obadiah 1:21

Obadiah gives a great prophecy of the coming of saviours. Who are these saviours? I thought Jesus Christ was the Saviour? Indeed, Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world! We all love the scripture that tells us that a saviour was born to us in the city of David.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David A SAVIOUR, which is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:11

Even though Jesus is the Saviour of the world, there is something we are supposed to do to save people. In a sense, that makes us also saviours of men. What are we supposed to do to save men? We are supposed to preach the gospel and share the love of Jesus everywhere.

Jesus Christ died on the cross two thousand years ago but many people do not know what happened on the cross. Jesus Christ exerted great effort and paid a high price so that men could be saved. It is interesting though, that people cannot be saved without us preaching about Jesus. How can they know about Jesus if they have not ever been told? How can they hear if no one has ever been sent to them?

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

People who live today are not aware of events that have taken place in the past. It is normal for events, no matter how dramatic they were, to be forgotten quite soon after they occurred. Indeed, this is the reason why history is studied in school. People do not just happen to know what happened in the past.

Events fade away and often repeat themselves in naturally recurring cycles. The death of Jesus Christ was an unfortunate event where an innocent man was lumped together with criminals and executed unjustly. Unjust executions have been occurring for centuries. The wickedness, the betrayal, the cruelty and the religious madness that was exhibited at the cross were nothing so unusual in the history of mankind. It should have been forgotten within a few months of the event. Jesus knew that His death on the cross was nothing unusual in the lives of wicked men. It was nothing to write home about. Wicked men are always wicked!

It was important that the rest of the world would know of the story of Jesus Christ. Why is that? Because as many as believe that Jesus is the Son of God shall be saved!

Indeed, a famous Jewish historian called Josephus wrote a reliable account about what happened in the time of Jesus Christ. Josephus was born in Jerusalem only four years after Jesus was crucified on the cross. His account of Jesus Christ would obviously only be read by history students who study Jewish history. Indeed, there are very few of such history students in the world. Did Jesus Christ die just for history students? Certainly not!

Ordinary people who do not study history also have to know about Jesus Christ and what He has done for us. *If there was no preaching, just a few history students would hear about Jesus Christ.*

The power of God is available for the people that hear and believe the gospel. Salvation comes by faith and faith comes by hearing. If the world is to benefit from this great event of Jesus Christ dying on the cross and shedding His blood as the Lamb of God, people will have to hear about it. We have a duty to tell the whole world about Jesus Christ.

Importance of Last Words

It is no surprise that Jesus' very last words contain a clear commission to go into the whole world to inform people about Jesus Christ. In various different accounts, Christians are asked to go out into the whole world and preach repentance and forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ.

This last command of Jesus Christ is the basis of this book. Some people call it "The Great Commission". Perhaps, it is called the Great Commission because it is the last and final command of Jesus Christ to His disciples. Final words are special and great words! Last words carry a sense of being the most important words ever spoken by a human being. Since last words are the very last things a person will say, they are likely to be the most important and the most critical things he will ever say.

Last Words are Ominous Words

One of our pastors lay dying in the hospital. He was deathly ill and he knew that he had but a few more days to go. He called his son and asked his son to record his last words. When he died, his family came for his body and took it to a mortuary somewhere in town. They made their plans to bury him in their private family mausoleum. Then his son came up to the family, (comprising mainly of his uncles and aunties) and informed them that he had recorded the very last words of his father.

When the family listened to the last words of his father, they changed their minds about almost everything they were doing. Why was that?

The last words of this pastor were very simple. He said, "When I die, my body should be handed over to Bishop Dag Heward-Mills. Whatever he and the other bishops decide about my funeral should be accepted as final. The bishops should decide where and how I should be buried."

Now, the family, who were sticklers for their traditions about funerals, promptly relinquished his body to the church and asked that I decide everything about the funeral. They were remarkably

respectful and submissive to the last words of the dying man.

You see, last words are frightening words. People are afraid of the last words of a person. Perhaps, they feel that "last words" carry some kind of mystical power. They fear that some mischief will befall anyone who goes against the last words of a person.

Danger for Ignoring the "Last Words"

Indeed, a great mischief has befallen the church for ignoring the last words of Jesus Christ. Because we have ignored His instruction to go into the world, the plagues of sin, poverty, debt, homosexuality, fornication and other perversions have fallen on the church. Today, the church is a phantom of what it is supposed to be.

Large parts of the church are powerless and helpless against demon power. The church is a large mass of tiny little spiritual children running around in circles, playing church games. Because the church has ignored the last words of Jesus, it has become an ineffective and powerless group.

Last Words are Important Words

Last words are not only ominous words but also important words. If you had an opportunity to say your very last words to a friend, would you talk about the soap that he should bath with or how he should iron his clothes? Would you not tell him something more important than that?

Would you not say something really deep, meaningful and powerful? Would you not say something that he should remember for the rest of his life? Would you spend your time talking about different types of soap that he could bath with? Let's be serious!

I remember watching a documentary about a flight that was about to crash. There was something wrong with the tail of this jumbo jet and it kept going up and down in a crazy manner until it eventually crashed into a mountainside after an hour of mad flying. There were only one or two survivors. Some of you may know about this crash. Because the plane kept going up and down for an hour,

everyone on board knew they were doomed. It was only a matter of time before they crashed.

When the search and rescue party arrived on the scene, they found many dead people. Amazingly, many of the passengers had written final and farewell letters to their loved ones. During the time that the plane was zigzagging across the sky, many had written their last words for their loved ones. Some of these letters were found in the pockets and bags of the dead passengers. What a sad story!

I always wondered what these doomed passengers wrote to their loved ones. Don't you think they wrote about something important? Do you think they wrote about the food to give to their dog? Do you think they wrote about the vet's appointment they had to take their cat to? I don't think so! They must have written something very important because they were writing last words.

When Jesus stood on the Mount of Olives speaking His last words, I don't think He cracked jokes about Peter's love for fish bones, fish eyes and fish skin. I do not think He commented on how He would miss Peter's amazing grilled fish. I do not think He told Peter how He would miss the tilapia in Galilee. Indeed, Jesus spoke about the most important thing of all.

Those last words of Jesus are what are called the Great Commission. The Great Commission could also be called the Last Commission. Hudson Taylor, missionary to China, made the term "Great Commission" popular. I agree with him that it is the Great Commission. It certainly was the last commission of Jesus. It stands out from everything else Jesus said because it was the last commission.

Amazingly, you will find that the last words in many of the New Testament books contain a variation of this last and great commission. This last and great commission is important because it makes it clear that Christians have an obligation towards the sinners in our world. Indeed, we have an obligation to make ourselves saviours of men.

It was William Carey (missionary to India) who wrote a book entitled *"An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for*

the Conversion of the Heathen." It was William Booth (founder of The Salvation Army) who encouraged us "to make ourselves saviours of men."

These great men only echoed the words of Jesus Christ. They have only repeated the great commission in their own words. "Make yourselves saviours of men!" Indeed, we must make ourselves saviours of men! By repeating the stories of Jesus Christ and telling people how great He is and how He saved us on the cross, we make ourselves saviours of men.

We are under a great obligation towards the sinners and the heathen of this world. We are under an obligation to speak! We are under obligation to go! We are under obligation to preach! We are under obligation to pray! We are under obligation to fight for the souls of men! We are under obligation to make ourselves saviours of men! We have no other choice than to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is time to listen carefully to the last and great words of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Chapter 2

Where Was the Great Commission Delivered?

GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:19-20

t is obvious that the Great Commission was repeated in various forms and in different places. At various times and at various places Jesus' last words seemed to be similar. Slight variations of the Great Commission seemed to be given at different places and at different times. Beware of repeated last words!

1. Matthew's Great Commission was given on a mountain in Galilee.

Then THE ELEVEN DISCIPLES WENT AWAY INTO GALILEE, INTO A MOUNTAIN where Jesus had appointed them…

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:16, 18-20

2. Mark's Great Commission was given when He appeared to His disciples at dinnertime.

AFTERWARD HE APPEARED UNTO THE ELEVEN AS THEY SAT AT MEAT, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of

heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was raised.

And he said unto them, GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Mark 16:14-18

3. Luke's Great Commission was given at a dinner in Jerusalem.

And they rose up the same hour, and RETURNED TO JERUSALEM, AND FOUND THE ELEVEN GATHERED TOGETHER, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? AND THEY GAVE HIM A PIECE OF A BROILED FISH, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said

unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: AND THAT REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS SHOULD BE PREACHED IN HIS NAME AMONG ALL NATIONS, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM.

Luke 24:33-47

4. John's Great Commission was given by the sea of Tiberias.

AFTER THESE THINGS JESUS SHEWED HIMSELF AGAIN TO THE DISCIPLES AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS; and on this wise shewed he himself….So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, FEED MY LAMBS.

John 21:1, 15

5. The Great Commission in Acts was given on the Mount of Olives just before He ascended in a cloud.

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: AND YE SHALL BE WITNESSES UNTO ME BOTH IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDAEA, AND IN SAMARIA, AND UNTO THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. THEN RETURNED THEY UNTO JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT CALLED OLIVET, WHICH IS FROM JERUSALEM A SABBATH DAY'S JOURNEY.

Acts 1:8-12

Chapter 3

Men Have Become Saviours of Themselves

But realize this that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be LOVERS OF SELF, LOVERS OF MONEY, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, LOVERS OF PLEASURE RATHER THAN LOVERS OF GOD, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NASB)

In the last days, men shall be lovers of themselves, lovers of money and lovers of pleasure. These are terrible depravities to which men will fall in the last days. The love for ourselves and the love for money have made us the lowest types of Christians that have ever lived on the face of this earth. We have more knowledge, more resources, more money and more grace than any other generation. Yet we are the ones who are doing the least for the kingdom of God. We are truly the Laodicean, lukewarm church.

After salvation, most Christians assume that Christianity spreads by osmosis. From the pastors to the lowest members of the churches, hardly anyone thinks about the souls of men.

Jesus' ominous last words to His church are ignored with a stunning boldness that raises the question of insanity. *Almost everything else is preached about except soul winning. We have nice times, nice churches, nice feelings, nice programs, nice songs, nice worship nights, nice congregations and nice dignified pastors but no one preaches about soul winning.*

The great last words of Jesus Christ have been set aside. Everyone is silent about the Great Commission. Everyone thinks that someone else will do it. Everyone thinks that someone else will go.

Perhaps, a lady who cannot find a husband will go on the mission field. Perhaps, a boy who dropped out of school will go on the mission. In a recent survey, it was discovered that over sixty percent of the modern church did not know what the Great Commission was.

It is sad to see that the Great Commission is not regarded as a great commission any more. In spite of this, I can tell you that God's work will flourish and souls will be saved, no matter who goes or who does not go.

The "love yourself spirit" of the last days has grounded the church of God. There are now few real evangelists, few church planters and even fewer missionaries.

Chapter 4

The Vision of the Dark and Stormy Ocean

IN THE VISIONS OF GOD BROUGHT HE ME INTO THE LAND of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south. . .

And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and SET THINE HEART UPON ALL THAT I SHALL SHEW THEE; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel.

Ezekiel 40:2, 4

William Booth had some amazing visions, which are worth reproducing in this book. They give us a clear picture of Christian behaviour towards the Great Commission. I hope you receive them and I hope they will charge you up as much as they have done me. Make yourselves saviours of men!

William Booth, founder of The Salvation Army, once narrated a vision that he had whilst meditating on the state of the dying souls all around him. Visions from God are given so that we set our hearts on all that we see and hear. This is the vision he had:

The Vision

He saw a dark and stormy ocean. There were black clouds hanging heavily over the sea. Every now and then, there were vivid flashes of lightning and thunder. When the winds moaned, the waves rose and foamed and dipped and rose again. Indeed, anyone who has been in the wild ocean before will know that this is a truly dangerous and deadly place to be.

In that ocean, he saw myriads of poor human beings plunging, floating, shouting and shrieking and cursing and struggling and drowning.

As these poor souls cursed and shrieked, they rose and shrieked again and then sank into the water to rise no more.

Suddenly, he saw in the midst of this dark and angry ocean, a mighty rock that rose up like a mountain in the midst of the sea. Around this great rock, was a platform onto which some of the poor struggling, drowning wretches were continually climbing out of the angry ocean.

William Booth says that he was delighted to see the platform, which was being used as a point of salvation for the struggling souls in the sea. As he continued to observe the scene in the ocean, he noticed some amazing things, which reveal a lot about our behaviour today.

1. ***Saviours of men:*** He noticed that a number of those who were already safe on the platform were helping the poor creatures, still in the angry waters, to reach the same place of safety.

2. ***Organisers of salvation:*** He found a number of those who had been rescued, planning and organising ladders, ropes, rafts, boats and any other equipment that they could use to effectively save some of the poor, struggling creatures from the sea.

3. ***Self Sacrifice:*** He also noticed that there were some of the saved people who actually jumped into the water regardless of all consequences, to rescue the perishing. The sight of the people being saved and the sight of those sacrificial saviours delighted William Booth greatly.

4. ***Most had forgotten:*** William Booth also noticed that although all those on the platforms had been rescued from the sea at one time or another, nearly everyone seemed to have forgotten about it. The memory of the dangerous sea no longer troubled them. The fact that people on the platform did not have any agonising care for the poor perishing ones that were drowning before their very eyes was the most difficult scene to behold. Indeed, many of the drowning and struggling creatures in the sea were friends, husbands or wives, mothers, sisters, brothers and even children of those rescued already.

5. ***Many were unconcerned:*** The next amazing thing to behold was the fact that the people on the platform were aware of what was happening in the sea. There were two reasons for this. First of all, they were living on the platform in full view of the struggling, drowning souls in the water.

Secondly, those on the platform regularly went to hear lectures in which the awful state of the poor drowning creatures was described. In spite of these facts, most of the people on the platform were unconcerned.

6. ***Trading in full view:*** Another interesting thing about the occupants of the platform was their different occupations, which they carried out, in full view of the perishing. Many of them were absorbed, day and night, in trading. They did their trading to make gain and to store up their savings in boxes and strong rooms.

7. ***Growing Flowers on the Rock:*** Some of the people on the platform were actually spending their time growing flowers on the side of rock. Others were painting pieces of cloth or playing music. Some were dressing themselves up in different styles and walking about to be admired. Others occupied themselves in eating and drinking. All this was done in full view of the poor struggling creatures that were drowning in the water all around them.

8. ***Arguments on the Rock:*** Some of the people on the platform were taken up with arguing about the poor drowning creatures. The arguments had to do with what would become of them in the future.

9. ***Religious Ceremonies on the Rock:*** Whilst beholding the strugglers in the sea, some of the people on the platform contented themselves with holding curious religious ceremonies. By carrying out these ceremonies, they felt content that they had performed their duty towards the perishing creatures.

10. ***The Higher Platform:*** William Booth now looked more closely and noticed that some of the people who had come onto the rock had discovered a path that led to a higher platform away from the black clouds and stormy ocean. From that higher platform, they expected to be carried away one day to the main land. Those on

this higher platform passed their time away with pleasant thoughts, congratulating themselves on their good fortune in being rescued from the stormy oceans. They sang songs about the happiness that they would experience when taken to the main land.

11. ***The Great Being:*** Suddenly, the miseries, agonies, quarrels and blasphemies of these poor struggling people in this dark sea moved the pity of the great God so much that He sent a Great Being to save them. This Great Being leaped right into the raging sea, among the drowning sinking people, where he toiled to rescue them with great cries, tears and sweat and bloodied hands. As the Great Being toiled, he continually cried to those already rescued to help him.

12. ***No Help for the Great Being:*** Another strange thing was that those on the platform heard the Great Being calling for help but did not take heed nor care about him. They said they loved him very much and were in full sympathy with him in the task he had undertaken. In fact, they worshipped him and professed to do so. But they were so taken up with their professions, their money saving, their pleasures, their families and their nice activities.

13. ***Make us more secure:*** Perhaps the strangest of all things was that those on the platform were actually crying to the Great Being to come out of the water and spend some time with them to make them even happier than they were. Some wanted him to come and make them more secure on the rock. Others wanted him to come and take away various doubts and misgivings that they had. They would cry to the Great Being who was in the water with the poor struggling drowning creatures, "Come to us! Come and help us!"

14. ***A Clear Vision:*** This vision is not difficult to interpret. You do not need to be a rocket scientist to understand it. The rock was the place of salvation. All those drowning in the water are the dying shrieking, struggling, agonising multitudes who are going to hell. The Great Being is Jesus Christ who was sent to save people. The people on the rock are the unconcerned Christians who fill our churches today.

15. ***A True Vision:*** How true this vision is! It describes us in great detail. We cannot escape the description of the unconcerned church who have not made themselves saviours of men.

This vision shows us that saved people have neglected their God-given work of saving souls. It is the obligation of the Christian church to save many souls.

Chapter 5

The Great Commission According to Matthew

And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST: TEACHING THEM To observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:17-20

Each and every one of the apostles repeated the Great Commission because they were the last words of Jesus Christ to us all. Let us look at this great commission in detail. Perhaps God will speak to you about your God-given role in the Great Commission.

According to Matthew, these were the last words of Jesus Christ. This commission was given on one of the mountains of Galilee. (Matthew 28:16). There are a series of mountains that surround the lake of Galilee. These words that Jesus spoke on one of these mountains are what we call The Great Commission. Let us go through the highlights of this Great Commission according to Matthew. Make yourselves saviours of men!

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION OF POWER:

Jesus said all power has been given to Him! You must preach the gospel with power, with signs and with wonders. Yet, most Christians have gone into the world without the power of God. Teaching with PowerPoint, computers and projectors is not the same as teaching with miracles, signs and wonders. Many parts of the world need a demonstration of God's power. You must become a minister of God with real power demonstration!

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO GO:

Jesus said, "Go!" Yet most Christians have stayed. Few churches send anybody anywhere. Few pastors send anyone anywhere. It is a commission to move and yet the church is stationary. We stay in our nice churches! We stay in our nice countries. We stay in our comfortable homes. Most of the church is not going anywhere.

3. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO TEACH:

Jesus said, "Teach!" The Great Commission is a commission to teach. Teach what? It is not a commission to teach economics, business, physics, chemistry or history. Do you think that Jesus Christ is sending you out to teach economics, business or history? You must be joking! He is not doing that. These subjects did not even exist in His day. He is sending us out to teach the word of God.

The commission to teach implies the need to stay in a place longer. This is how churches are formed. Indeed, the Great Commission, according to Matthew is a commission to plant churches so that teaching can come on. It is not possible to teach much in a day. It is not possible to teach much in two days. You have to live with people if you are going to teach them anything. This is where church planting becomes important. We can conclude safely, therefore, that the Great Commission is also a commission to plant churches.

4. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO BAPTIZE:

Jesus said, "Baptize!" Yet many do not baptize anyone in water. We sprinkle water on babies and claim that they are baptized. Baptism must accompany salvation. Every great commissioner must be a baptizer of souls.

5. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO ALL NATIONS:

Jesus said, "Go to all nations!" Most Christians have not gone to many nations. Few churches reach out beyond their communities. If you search the Internet, you will find very few international

ministries.

Few churches ever look beyond their horizon to see if there are souls that need their good news. Churches are happy with their nice times, nice games, nice conferences, nice get-togethers, nice Easter and Christmas parties, nice choirs, nice lights and nice families.

We are expected to go to all nations. Because we do not go to nations, some nations are totally overwhelmed with other religions. There is a clear correlation between the religion in a country and the fulfilment of the commission by obedient commissioners. Wherever a great commissioner went, that nation turned to Jesus Christ.

I once visited Malta and found a nation which claimed to be Christian. They claimed to be Christian because Apostle Paul was marooned on that island. His going to that island turned the whole island to Christ. Wherever a great commissioner goes, the nation turns to Christ.

I once visited Chennai in the southern part of India. I was told that this part of India had a lot of Christians. Apparently, doubting Thomas the disciple of Jesus, had gone to Chennai as a great commissioner of the gospel. The rest of India did not have the blessing of having a great commissioner so it fell to other religions.

Failing to obey the Great Commission of Jesus Christ is the reason why many people are not saved today. Entire nations and regions have fallen to darkness because believers would not even talk about the Great Commission of Jesus.

6. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION OF HIS PRESENCE.

Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." In the Great Commission according to Matthew, Jesus promises His presence to those who do His will. The presence of a person includes experiencing "His person", hearing the person's voice and enjoying the person's gifts.

As you are committed to obeying the Great Commission, you can expect to experience His person, enjoy His voice speaking to you all the time and also enjoy His gifts in your life. Many ministries do not have the presence of God any longer. They are very far from the Great Commission. This is why the church is powerless and no longer hears from God nor experiences His gifts and power.

7. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD:

Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This Great Commission is valid until the end of the world. No new commandment has been given to us. We are to carry on doing the same thing until the end of the world.

Some people think the Great Commission has already been fulfilled. How can this be when billions of people do not know Jesus Christ? How can you say the Great Commission has been fulfilled when the end of the world has not happened? This commission is till the end of the world.

Chapter 6

The Great Commission According to Mark

Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE. HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED; BUT HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT SHALL BE DAMNED. AND THESE SIGNS shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

Mark 16:14-19

Marks' commission was given when Jesus appeared suddenly to the eleven whilst they were eating. This proves that God can give you a momentous message even whilst you are eating. Each and every one of the apostles repeated the Great Commission because they were the last words of Jesus Christ to us all.

According to Mark, these were the last words of Jesus Christ. They form what we call The Great Commission. These are the highlights of this Great Commission according to Mark. Let us look at Mark's Great Commission. Perhaps God will speak to you about an aspect of this Great Commission. Make yourselves saviours of men!

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO GO:

Jesus said, "Go! Go!" These were His last words. These words have been disobeyed by a large percentage of the church.

The opposite of "going" is "staying"! The exact opposite of going somewhere is settling down. The exact opposite of going

somewhere is establishing yourself somewhere else. What a nice and settled church we have today! There is very little movement, very little missionary work, very little evangelism and very little church planting.

What is the greatest characteristic of the present-day church? It is a church of pleasant feelings, pleasant meetings, pleasant songs, pleasant conferences and pleasant prospects. These are not people who want to go anywhere! These are not people that are going anywhere!

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO SPECIFICALLY PREACH THE GOSPEL:

Jesus said, *"Preach the gospel!"* Unlike Matthew's commission, this commission specifies preaching and not teaching. Preach the good news of Jesus Christ! That is the gospel! "Gospel" means "good news." The news of Jesus Christ and the cross of Jesus Christ is the best news this world has ever heard.

Today, most pastors do not know how to preach the gospel. We can teach on prosperity, abundance, success, faith and miracles but few can actually preach the gospel.

I wrote a book called, "How you can Preach Salvation." I wrote that book because of the great deficiency in our preaching of the gospel. There are many ways in which you can preach the gospel. The gospel of Jesus Christ can be preached by preaching about the impending judgments of heaven and hell. The gospel of Jesus Christ can be preached by preaching about the love of God. You can preach about the blood of Jesus Christ. It is important for you to learn how to preach the gospel.

3. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO GO TO ALL THE WORLD:

Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world!" This is the mandate we have been given. Who will go to *"all the world"*? The answer is "YOU will go to all the world!" Everyone thinks someone else will go to the entire world. That is why no one goes. You must assume a personal responsibility for this commission. You must think of the whole

world. Your voice must be heard in the whole world. You must preach in the whole wide world.

4. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO EVERY CREATURE:

Jesus said, "Preach … to every creature!" Does that include animals? I do not think so. Souls lost in sin and depravity are like pitiful creatures that need help. The dying multitudes struggling in the ocean of desperation are the creatures Jesus is talking about.

The perishing crowds who live in sin, misery and pain are the creatures God is talking about. The thousands of shrieking, agonizing prostitutes, thieves, liars, blasphemers, drunkards, murderers and ungodly people are the creatures Jesus Christ is talking about. Many human beings are reduced to pitiful demonized creatures. Multitudes are thirsting for the milk of salvation.

5. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION WITH SIGNS FOLLOWING:

Jesus said, "These signs shall follow [you]!" Expect these signs to follow you throughout your ministry:

Expect to speak with new tongues: Supernatural tongues will flow out of every great commissioner. Hours and hours of tongues must pour out of you. Tongues are a supernatural form of communication between you and heaven. Just as secret service personnel have radios for their secret and mysterious communication, you have been given tongues for your secret and mystical communication with heaven.

Expect to cast out devils: Demon spirits have occupied the masses. When you encounter a human being, you can assume you are encountering a demon power behind the person. We are dealing with demon spirits all the time.

Expect to survive the eating of poisonous and unhealthy things: Many of the things we eat today are not healthy. Because you are a gospel commissioner, you will not be harmed by anything that you eat or drink. Others may die from it, but you will survive!

Expect to survive life-threatening and dangerous events like taking up serpents: Others may die from it but you will not die. What kills others will not kill you because you are a great commissioner.

Expect to lay hands on the sick and expect the sick to recover: You become a powerful vessel of healing when you are a great commissioner. Do not underestimate your prayers. Your prayers will make people well. Your prayers will bring miracles to many people.

Chapter 7

The Great Commission According to Luke

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

Luke 24:36-44

THEN OPENED HE THEIR UNDERSTANDING, THAT THEY MIGHT UNDERSTAND THE SCRIPTURES, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And THAT REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS SHOULD BE PREACHED IN HIS NAME AMONG ALL NATIONS, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be ENDUED WITH POWER from on high.

Luke 24:45-49

All the apostles repeated the last commission because they were the great commandments of Jesus Christ to us all. Let us look at this last commission in detail. Have you ever wondered why we do not meditate on the last words of Jesus Christ? This time, I believe God will speak to you about your role in world evangelism and church

planting.

According to Luke, these were some of the last words of Jesus Christ. This commission was given in Jerusalem when Jesus appeared suddenly in the midst of His disciples.

These are the highlights of this Great Commission according to Luke. Make yourselves saviours of men!

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO OPEN THE UNDERSTANDING OF PEOPLE:

Before giving the commission, Jesus opened their understanding to the scriptures. The scripture was made clear to them. Without the scripture being made clear to you, you will not give yourself to church planting and soul winning.

People whose understanding is not opened have developed a warped version of Christianity. Indeed, much of Christianity is simply the creation of human happiness, human excitement, pleasant interactions and pleasant socialization.

The Christian church without soul winning and church planting is a powerless, lifeless and aimless social club.

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS TO PREACH REPENTANCE:

The commission according to Luke, specifies the topics we are to preach about. Matthew and Mark do not specify the topics we are to preach about. In Luke's commission, we are clearly told to preach about repentance. Tell people to repent of their sins.

Repentance of sins means turning away from sin. The Great Commission includes the naming of the sins and wickedness of human beings so that they can turn away from them. Today, preachers do not mention sins in church. Sins like fornication, lying, stealing, and homosexuality are not mentioned any more. Mentioning the sin of homosexuality is called "hate speech." Because we do not preach about sin any more, the church is filled with unrepentant and unchanged religious sinners.

Jesus, in His last words to His disciples, mentioned the topic of

repentance. How can we disregard a clear instruction given to the church? How can we ignore it and present ourselves as wise, self-righteous, dignified preachers?

Many pastors have become preachers of white lies.

A white lie is a lie that is told in order to be polite and to stop someone from being upset by the truth. Pastors are trying to be polite and prevent people from being upset. Are you called to be polite to the world? Did Jesus tell you to be polite? Did Jesus commission you to prevent people from being upset or offended? You are called to preach repentance. Stop making up stories and start preaching repentance!

3. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO PREACH THE REMISSION OF SINS:

The Great Commission is the commission to preach about the forgiveness of sins. The blood of Jesus Christ washes away the sins of all those who come to the cross to receive mercy. To be a great commissioner, you must be an expert in preaching forgiveness and the remission of sins through the blood of Jesus.

To make yourselves saviours of men, you must be an expert in preaching about what Jesus Christ did on the cross for us. The cross of Jesus Christ at Calvary is the greatest event of forgiveness for the sins of our wicked world.

I once heard a pastor preaching about the cross. He said we are no longer to sing songs about hiding behind the cross. We are not cowards! We do not need to hide behind any cross! We are to sing songs about victory and abundance. It is no wonder that this minister withered and faded out of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

The words “Calvary”, “the cross”, “the blood” must not be made fun of. One pastor said he was glad that he no longer preached a religion of blood and the brutality of the cross. I watched as he ended his life and ministry in a rubbish dump. We must be wary of clever preaching that mocks at the foundations of Christianity.

We must be wary of these dignified and powerful ambassadors of

the church who trivialise salvation, gospel preaching and make fun of the cross of Jesus Christ. If the cross of Jesus Christ is too basic for you, then you do not understand what Christianity is about.

We are commanded to preach the remission of sins. Let us do just that! We have not been commissioned to preach about finances and management planning. We have not been commissioned to preach about investments, politics, stocks and bonds. We have been commissioned to preach about the blood of Jesus Christ and the remission of sins.

4. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO ALL NATIONS:

To be a great commissioner is to have an interest in all nations. Inward looking people are not interested in reaching the nations. People who are very nationalistic cannot be used to reach nations. Patriotism is good. It is good to shout slogans about your country. However, this patriotism has a way of excluding other nations.

I visited a great nation whose power extends across the globe. This nation is very patriotic, with the people being very proud to come from there. If you watch their TV programs, they say things like, "I thank God I was not born in Africa. I give glory to God that He spared me the agony of having to live in Africa." You will find that Christians in such "patriotic" countries do not fulfil the Great Commission.

Indeed, there is a large group of ministers who feel that they are fulfilling the Great Commission by going on television. They say, "I reach so many millions on TV every day." They say, "I am fulfilling the Great Commission to millions on television every day", when in actual fact no one is watching them.

No matter how much you are on television, you will have to send human beings to preach the gospel. There is no other way to preach the gospel than to go on the ground.

After Iraq was air-bombed by the United States, they still had to send ground troops if they wanted to win the war. No matter how many air strikes are delivered, the victory will be won when ground

troops move in to take possession of the city.

5. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION WITH THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT:

Jesus told them to wait for the power of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the presence of the Holy Spirit is what you need to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Without the Holy Spirit's power you will preach economics, business, politics and maybe, even physics. It takes power to stay on the salvation trail. It takes power to preach about apparently abstract topics like the cross, Calvary and the blood of Jesus.

I heard one pastor make an unfortunate comment. He said, "What is the use of the blood, the cross and the nails to the people that I am preaching to? They need business! They need empowerment! They need success! They need to be successful in the marketplace!"

People who are against the cross of Jesus Christ should be driven out of the church because they are destroying the foundations of what we believe. Without power, you will find the gospel abstract and irrelevant. When you have the power of the Holy Spirit you will be able to stay on course and speak confidently about Jesus Christ even though He lived over two thousand years ago.

Chapter 8

The Great Commission According to John

This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, LOVEST THOU ME MORE THAN THESE? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, feed my lambs. HE SAITH TO HIM AGAIN THE SECOND TIME, SIMON, SON OF JONAS, LOVEST THOU ME? HE SAITH UNTO HIM, YEA, LORD; THOU KNOWEST THAT I LOVE THEE. HE SAITH UNTO HIM, FEED MY SHEEP. HE SAITH UNTO HIM THE THIRD TIME, SIMON, SON OF JONAS, LOVEST THOU ME? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

John 21:14-18

John repeats the last commission because it is the great commandment of Jesus Christ to us all. Let us look at this last commission in detail and meditate on the last words of Jesus Christ.

According to John, these were some of the last words of Jesus Christ. This event and this commissioning took place by the sea of Tiberias. These are the highlights of this Great Commission according to John. Make yourselves saviours of men!

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION OF LOVE:

Perhaps, your greatest expression of love to Jesus is to feed His sheep and to look after them. This is the Great Commission! Your

great love for God can be expressed by feeding and teaching His little lambs.

The Great Commission is a commission of love. In this last chapter of the book of John, Jesus Christ spoke to Peter and commissioned him to feed His sheep and to teach them. There is a love element in this commission that is not found in any of the other three commissions. Love is therefore the highlight of the Great Commission according to John.

"Do you love me? If you love me feed my sheep." Feeding the sheep is the same as going to the nations. Feeding the sheep is the same as teaching the members. But Jesus is warning that only lovers of God will obey the Great Commission. How true this is!

Only those who love God can, and will obey the Great Commission. Today, it is as though there is a great commission to find money. It is as though the new great commission is to get rich and acquire the wealth of this world. Pastors preach as though they have been commissioned by God to make everyone rich. Perhaps, some people have a special instruction from the Lord to make people rich. But I am sure you cannot show me this great commission in the Bible. The Great Commission is the commission to preach the gospel. If you love God, you will obey him!

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

John 14:21

When you have the commandment of God you obey Him and you prove that you love Him. There is no other way to prove that you love God. You cannot kiss God, you cannot love God, you cannot have sex with God (excuse my language), you cannot give God chocolate, you cannot write a letter to God. The only way you can show God that you love Him is to obey Him. Jesus said over and over that the only way to love Him was to obey Him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto

him, and make our abode with him.

John 14:23

This reality must grip your heart today, Your failure to preach the gospel and to obey the Great Commission is the greatest evidence that you do not love God.

So if you do not love God, what do you love? You love what you preach about. The topics that have filled your heart are the things that you love. The money, the abundance, the prosperity and the success are the things that you actually love. Out of the abundance of your heart, your mouth is speaking all the time. It is time to turn your heart towards God and to love God.

John was the baby disciple. He was the youngest and he observed with great interest as Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him. Today, the apostles are looking on with interest and amazement at our lack of love for Jesus.

This is a commission to emphasise your love for God as the basis of the Great Commission.

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO FEED THE SHEEP:

In this version of the Great Commission, we see Jesus showing great love and concern for converts. The Great Commission includes following up of converts and teaching them the word of God. Teaching and repeating the words of Jesus Christ to converts is very important. Jesus really loves the people that are saved. He loves the souls that need salvation. He equally loves those that have come to know Him.

Your ability to care for people is a reflection of your understanding of the Great Commission. The Great Commission is not just the holding of a great crusade. A great crusade is a great achievement but is only a part of making yourself a saviour of men. I am a great believer in great crusades. But I am also a believer in church planting and caring for sheep. Being a good pastor and caring for the sheep is a vital part of being a great commissioner.

If you want to fulfil the Great Commission, you must develop your ability to have outreaches as well as care for the converts.

Chapter 9

The Great Commission According to Acts

And, being assembled together with them , commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he , ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. BUT YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER, AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU: AND YE SHALL BE WITNESSES UNTO ME BOTH IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDAEA, AND IN SAMARIA, AND UNTO THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

Acts 1:4-9

Luke repeats the last commission in the Book of Acts because it is the great commandment of Jesus Christ to us all. Let us look at this last commission in detail. Have you ever wondered why we do not meditate on the last words of Jesus Christ?

According to the Book of Acts these were the last words of Jesus Christ before He was taken up into glory from the Mount of Olives.

These last words of Jesus Christ are similar to the ones recorded in other books. This event and commission took place on the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:8-12). They form what we call The Great Commission. These are the highlights of this Great Commission according to the Book of Acts.

The highlights of this Great Commission are:

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION DRIVEN BY

THE HOLY SPIRIT:

A commission from the Holy Spirit: The highlight of this commission is the fact that the Holy Spirit is poured out into the world leading to an army of great commissioners being sent out. The direct response to the presence of the Holy Spirit is salvation and soul winning. Where the Holy Spirit is present, there is soul winning and there is an emphasis on the Great Commission. Where the Holy Spirit is absent, there is an emphasis on other things. Today, what do churches emphasize on? The church emphasizes on pleasant times, pleasant meetings, prosperity, security, safety, good living, good experiences, happiness, money, pleasant families, pleasant children, pleasant conferences and other nice events. Where the Holy Spirit has stopped working, people do not think of souls. A church devoid of the Holy Spirit is a church that has stopped planting churches and winning souls.

One day, the Lord showed me a church. Everyone's hands were lifted up as they worshipped the Lord. God spoke to me and said, "It is not my Spirit that is moving in this church. It is the spirit of the world." I was stunned. He told me it is the spirit of the world that loves the things of the world. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the proud things of this life are all from the spirit of the world. He said to me, "Where the Holy Spirit is, there is soul winning, there is witnessing and there is the feeding of the sheep." A spirit cannot be seen! You can only see the evidence of the spirit. That is how the wind is. You cannot see the wind but you can see the evidence of the wind. The great evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit is seen in the harvesting of the lost, perishing, agonizing and desperate multitudes to Jesus Christ.

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION OF WITNESSING:

We have a commission to witness about Jesus Christ. In this commission, the unique element of witnessing is introduced. *The uniqueness of witnessing!*

Witnessing speaks of telling what you have seen and heard and experienced. This aspect of the Great Commission is unique because we are not given any topic to preach about. Witnessing is unique

because every single person can be involved in the Great Commission. Your duty is to preach the gospel from a personal point of view. Your duty is to tell others what you have experienced from God. Suddenly, all of us can be involved in the Great Commission. The Great Commission is not the preserve of a great evangelist or a super-sacrificial missionary. God is expecting all who have experienced salvation to become commissioners.

What is involved in witnessing? What do witnesses do when they go to court? They simply say what they know and what they have seen. One night in London, I was awakened by the sound of an argument between a man and a woman. I looked out of the window and I saw a very angry man and a very angry woman having a heated argument. It must have been a relationship that had gone bad. Suddenly, the woman entered the house and slammed the door. The young man, very incensed, took his car and began ramming the building. He reversed his car at top speed into the house. The house literally trembled at the impact of the car being driven into the house. He did this several times and drove off. In a few minutes there were several police cars and flashing lights all over the area. A couple of days later, a policeman knocked on my door and asked if I had seen anything two nights earlier.

They wanted witnesses to come to the court to testify. Of course I excused myself and explained that I was just a visitor and did not live there. But what do you think they wanted me to say in court? Do you think they wanted me to preach the gospel? Do you think they wanted me to talk about anatomy, physiology and biochemistry?

Do you think they wanted me to talk about success, economics or how to become a millionaire? Certainly not! They just wanted me to share what I knew and what I had seen. That is what it means to be a witness. Everyone can be a witness. The policeman did not ask me for my education. I did not have to know anything about the law. I just had to say what I knew and what I had experienced.

The best commissioners are those who simply tell the story of how Jesus changed their lives. Everybody has a story. We have all done wrong and Jesus forgave us. But will you tell your story? Do you ever tell your story? It is time to encourage every single Christian

to go out and tell the story of how Jesus Christ changed your life.

3. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION IN FOUR PHASES:

This commission, according to the Book of Acts, has four clear phases. Unlike the earlier commissions that just told us to go to the whole world, this commission divides the mission into four clear phases: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth.

The disciples started out in Jerusalem. Then they went to Judea, then to Samaria and then to the uttermost parts of the world.

Every ministry has four phases. If you fulfil your calling, you are likely to have four phases to your ministry. You will have a Jerusalem phase, a Judea phase, a Samaria phase and the uttermost parts of the earth phase. According to a vision that Kenneth Hagin had, most Christians do not even enter the first phase of their ministry. Are you going to enter the first phase of your ministry? Will you continue to the next phase of your ministry? Do you care about the souls that will perish because you do not obey God and enter the third phase of your ministry?

What about the uttermost parts of the earth? Will you ever go there? Will you ever do anything in those zones?

Jerusalem is your home base. Jerusalem is the beginning of your ministry. It is where salvation and ministry begins for you; your home city, your home country and your home community.

Judea is the very next major geographical area near you. If you started out in London, Judea is probably the rest of England, outside London. Judea is waiting for you to come there. You cannot praise yourself just because you have been successful in Jerusalem.

Samaria is even further than Judea. It is made up of people who are different from you. If you started out in London, Samaria is probably the rest of Europe. Samaria is equally waiting for you. People who are different from you will receive from you if you go

to them. People who speak differently from you will receive from you if you care to talk to them. People who are a different colour from you will be saved if you open your mouth and talk about Jesus.

The uttermost parts of the earth are the furthermost parts of the earth from your starting point.

Today, most Christians start out in Jerusalem and end in Jerusalem. No one in Judea knows that you are saved. Samaria never benefits from the life that you have received. As for the uttermost parts of the earth, they are condemned to damnation as far as you are concerned. May God have mercy on us for not going through the four phases of the Great Commission.

4. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO THE UTTERMOST CORNERS OF THE WORLD:

A highlight of the commission in the Book of Acts is the phrase "uttermost parts of the earth." The uttermost parts of the earth are the furthermost corners and the most remote islands of our world. There are many inhabited corners of this globe. It is the responsibility of the church to go to the inhabited corners of this globe.

Instead of finding out how to go there, pastors are involved in all kinds of business in the name of empowering modern day Christians in money and leadership. I hardly know of any modern day pastors who are discussing the uttermost and furthermost islands and locations of the earth. It is as though those corners of our inhabited globe are cursed. In fact, they are not cursed. It is the disobedient Christians who should watch out. God will find a way of reaching the lost agonizing creatures in our inhabited globe. I do not know how He is going to do it but I know He will find a way and He will find someone who will obey Him.

Many Christians say, "If God wants to get the gospel to an island, He will somehow get it to them or somehow bring the islanders to the gospel." If people like William Carey had followed such a low spiritual mentality, India would not have received the gospel.

I challenge you to rise up and put away the stupid spirit of disobedience and the nonsense Christianity of barrenness! It is time to start obeying the word of God and keeping the Great Commission. It is time to bear fruit.

Chapter 10

The Great Commission According to Timothy

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; PREACH THE WORD; BE INSTANT IN SEASON, OUT OF SEASON; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

2 Timothy 4:1-6

All the apostles repeated the last commission because they were the great commandments of Jesus Christ to us all. Apostle Paul was also concerned about souls.

The apostle Paul had a son in the ministry called Timothy. Timothy is someone he gave instructions to. He poured out his heart and shared the word of God with him. At the very end of his life, he shared these last words with him. This is the Great Commission according to Paul!

How do I know that these were Apostle Paul's last words? They were his last words because they are in the last chapter of his letter to Timothy. They were his last words because as soon as he said, "Do the work of an evangelist," he informed Timothy that he was ready to die. "I am now ready to be offered", he said and "…the time of my departure is at hand." (2 Timothy 4:6)

What exactly were the last words of Paul to Timothy?

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO PREACH THE WORD OF GOD:

A commission to preach the word: Paul gave a commission to Timothy to preach the word of God. Today, many are preaching sermons that are more relevant in the university than in the church. God is calling us to become sound preachers of the word of God. Let us stick with hard, true scripture.

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO PREACH IN SEASON AND OUT OF SEASON:

A commission to preach in season and out of season: In season and out of season speaks of preaching at all times. There are only two possible times to preach; in season or out of season. Preaching out of season is preaching when it seems inappropriate. The time must come when preaching must be continuous and persistent. Preaching only on Sundays is an old tradition. God has taken us way beyond once-a-week preaching. Preaching must go on every day.

3. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO GIVE SOUND DOCTRINE:

A commission to give sound doctrine: Sound doctrine speaks of things that are based on the Word. A lot of preaching is not sound. Stay with sound preaching and avoid false teachers. False teachers look just like good teachers. False teachers are real otherwise they would not be mentioned in the Bible. Do you know any false teachers? There are plenty around today.

4. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO ENDURE AFFLICTIONS:

A commission to endure afflictions: Paul then gives a commission to endure afflictions and sufferings. The concepts of sacrifice, suffering and losing have been thrown out of the church. The apostle Paul, in his last words to Timothy, asked him to endure difficulties, afflictions and sufferings. He did not tell him to enjoy a good life, pleasant times, pleasant days, nice experiences and nice conferences. He warned him to endure and go through sufferings

that he was destined to go through. Church planting will involve affliction and suffering. Church planting may involve sleeping on the floor for one year. Church planting may involve living in difficult towns and villages. Soul winning may involve risking your life to preach the gospel.

5. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST AND TO MAKE FULL PROOF OF THE MINISTRY:

A commission do the work of an evangelist and make full proof of ministry: The very last words that Paul spoke to Timothy were "Do the work of an evangelist" and "fulfil your ministry." (2 Timothy 4:5, NASB)

These are truly great last words from a great person who walked with God. DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST! DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST! DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST! DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST!

These are the last words Paul declared before he informed Timothy of his impending death. It is amazing how the last words are the most important words. They contain the most important things of all.

You will notice how Paul did not speak to Timothy about his marriage. He did not tell Timothy that a good marriage was the most important thing for a minister. His last words were not about Timothy's business ventures. Paul's last words were not about having a good life or having nice times, nice experiences and nice friends.

Paul did not seem to emphasize human happiness and human achievements. His very last words were "do the work of an evangelist" and "fulfil your ministry". This must be the most important thing!

Care for the perishing souls! Think about the creatures in agony! Think about the drowning multitudes! Become an evangelist to the lost souls in the dark ocean of sin and wickedness! Share God with someone. God is real! He is alive! We shall all see Jesus one day

and we shall know that telling people about Jesus was the most important thing a man could have done with his life!

Chapter 11

The Great Commission According to Jude

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others SAVE WITH FEAR, PULLING THEM OUT OF THE FIRE; HATING EVEN THE GARMENT SPOTTED BY THE FLESH. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Jude 1:21-25

All the apostles repeated the last commission because they were the great commandments of Jesus Christ to us all.

In these very last words of Jude to the believers, you hear the voice of Jesus loud and clear. Jude has twenty-five verses that were accepted in the Bible. In the twenty-third verse he gave his last commission before giving praise to God. There were three clear segments of his great commission.

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO SAVE PEOPLE WITH FEAR:

A commission to save people with fear: Save people with fear! You must be afraid of hell! You must be afraid of death because death is the end of life. There is no more opportunity to be saved after death. You must be afraid for people to go to hell.

You must be worried for their souls. You cannot just walk around in this world without being concerned about people who do not know God. Why do you think God saved you? Why do you think God showed you mercy and got you saved?

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO PULL

PEOPLE OUT OF FIRE:

A commission to pull people out of fire: There is a commission to pull people out of the fire. Which fire are we talking about? We are talking about the fires of hell. There are many people who are walking around who are virtually in hell. Many people have one foot in hell. Many people are a step away from death. Many people are about to die and go to hell.

The Great Commission is to snatch people from the fire. Someone may have one foot in hell but it is your duty to reach out and snatch them from hell fire. There are a lot of people on their deathbeds who will receive Christ. As they see eternity looming, they become more open to the gospel. Such people, who are half dead, only need someone who knows Jesus to snatch them out of the fire. They will give their lives to Jesus before they die. God is looking for people who will pull the half –dead and half-burnt souls out of the fire.

3. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION NOT TO BE CONTAMINATED WITH SIN:

A commission to not be contaminated with sin: As you reach out to win the lost, Jude warns you not to be contaminated with sin. Contamination speaks of something you acquire because of your contact with it. Today, much of the church is worldly. The church is heavily contaminated with worldly visions and dreams. Much of the church is contaminated with the sin of idolatry. Idols of mammon are erected everywhere in the church.

Worldly visions of cars, wealth, diamonds, glitter, glamour, houses and money have contaminated the visions of God's servants. Men of God speak about worldly visions with greater passion than worldly CEOs and bank managers.

When someone is contaminated, it means he has the problem he is trying to save you from. When a doctor is contaminated with the Ebola virus, it means he has contracted the problem from his contact with the patient. Apostle Jude warns us not to be contaminated by the world we are trying to save. Unfortunately, this is exactly what has happened. God's servants are contaminated

with the world. God's servants are truly contaminated with worldly pursuits and visions. This is why the church is no more becoming a saviour of men.

Apostle Jude's final words are words we must take seriously. We must get out of the contamination. We must make ourselves saviours of men!

Chapter 12

The Great Commission According to James

Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; LET HIM KNOW, THAT HE WHICH CONVERTETH THE SINNER FROM THE ERROR OF HIS WAY SHALL SAVE A SOUL FROM DEATH, AND SHALL HIDE A MULTITUDE OF SINS.

James 5:17-20

All the apostles repeated the last commission because they were the great commandments of Jesus Christ to us. Let us look at this last commission in detail. Have you ever wondered why Christians do not meditate on the last words of Jesus Christ? These are the highlights of this Great Commission according to James. Make yourselves saviours of men!

The Book of James has five chapters. The last chapter of James has twenty verses. The very last thing that James speaks about before signing out is the conversion of sinners from their sinful ways. The twentieth and last verse of the Book of James speaks of the conversion of sinners.

The conversion of sinners is the very last thing apostle James writes about. All through his letter, James speaks about wisdom, faith and many diverse topics. However, his last words have to do with the conversion of sinners and the saving of souls.

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION FOR MEN WITH LIKE PASSIONS:

Apostle James points out that Elijah was a man with weaknesses

and feelings just like all of us. In spite of this, God used him and answered his prayers. This is encouraging to all commissioners. Most commissioners can sense their own weaknesses and failings. Weaknesses and failings tend to discourage you from carrying out the Great Commission.

This is why Elijah's weaknesses are mentioned just before the parting words of James. This is to encourage all commissioners that you are just like Elijah. Keep pressing on in spite of the inflamed feelings and passions that you experience in your body. God is with you. He knows that he has sent weak men into the field. Supernatural power is needed to keep you on the Great Commission. You will have supernatural power and you will do wonders as you make yourselves saviours of men.

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO CONVERT SINNERS:

Apostle James signs out of his book reminding everyone that the conversion of sinners saves souls. Make it your business to save souls. Make it your business to convert sinners and hide a multitude of sins. Is it not amazing that the apostles of Jesus Christ ended their messages in the same way?

Rescue the agonizing, shrieking, screaming souls from hell fire! Is it not amazing that James' last words are about the conversion of sinners! There is no mention of developing our happy human lives into a story of worldly success, prosperity and pleasantness. There is no mention of the market place, investments, stocks and Christian businesses. You can virtually hear Apostle James shouting, CONVERT A SINNER! CONVERT A SINNER! CONVERT A SINNER!

When you convert a sinner, you hide a multitude of sins. It may surprise you to note that you hide not only the sinner's sins but also your own sins. Pleasing God is not the art of sinless living. Pleasing God is the art of obedient living. There is none righteous. Even the most holy saints cannot claim purity before God. Your obedience to His commandments is your only chance of gaining favour with God.

Peter rejected it when people tried to honour him for healing the

cripple. He said, “Do not think that it is by our own power or holiness that we have made this man to walk.” (Acts 3:12) Peter knew that he had no personal holiness that he could boast of. He had already betrayed Christ and everyone knew it.

Obedience is your master key to pleasing God. We are hopeless sinners and failures, no matter how good we are. Isaiah found out the hard way that he was actually a foul-mouthed sinner! When God appeared to him, he screamed, “I am undone! I am a dirty man! I am a sinner! Everyone around me is a sinner!” (Isaiah 6:5)

What then can you do to improve your standing before God? The answer is obedience! If you love Him, obey Him! Obey Him with all your weaknesses. Carry yourself into His presence and seek to obey His precious commission to you. Do not try to be holy and perfect because you will not succeed. When you convert a sinner, you cover your own sins!

Indeed, when you convert a sinner you cover a multitude of sins. In the Book of Hebrews, all the heroes of faith were heroes because they believed and obeyed God. Not even one of them was clean before God. Prostitutes like Rahab, murderers like David, liars like Abraham and murderers like Moses all had the multitude of their sins covered through their obedience to God’s commands. As you obey God and make yourself a savior of men your multitude of sins will be covered.

May God help us to become saviours of men!

Chapter 13

The Great Commission According to Peter

This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: BUT THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, WHICH ARE NOW, BY THE SAME WORD ARE KEPT IN STORE, RESERVED UNTO FIRE AGAINST THE DAY OF JUDGMENT AND PERDITION OF UNGODLY MEN. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. THE LORD IS NOT SLACK CONCERNING HIS PROMISE, AS SOME MEN COUNT SLACKNESS; BUT IS LONGSUFFERING TO US-WARD, NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH, BUT THAT ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE. BUT THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL COME AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, LOOKING FOR AND HASTING UNTO THE COMING OF THE DAY OF GOD, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in

peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

2 Peter 3:1-15

All the apostles repeated the last commission because they were the great commandments of Jesus Christ to us all. Let us look at the last commission given by the apostle Peter. I believe the apostles meditated on the last words of Jesus. The last words of Peter are found in the last words of the second letter of Peter. In these words again, you find the emphasis falling squarely on soul winning.

Let us have a look at the highlights of this Great Commission according to Peter.

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO ENSURE THAT NONE WILL PERISH:

Peter's last words are a commission to understand the looming judgments of God. Peter clearly declares that people are willingly ignorant of the fact that God is going to burn the earth with fire. These thoughts must be in the heart of every commissioner. Fire is coming! Judgment is coming!

Every great commissioner must believe that God is not willing that any should perish. It is amazing that Peter, in his last words, will speak about the fact that God did not want anyone to perish or go to hell.

Is that not why Jesus said we should go to the ends of the world? Is that not why Jesus said we should go to the uttermost parts of the world? God does not want anyone to perish even if they live in the uttermost part of the world.

God does not want anyone to perish even if they live on an island. God loves the whole world dearly. Will you love what He loves?

Will you care for what He cares for?

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO PREPARE

THE WORLD FOR A SUDDEN AND UNEXPECTED JUDGEMENT:

It is our duty as great commissioners to prepare the world for a sudden and unexpected judgment. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night… (2 Peter 3:10). Do thieves announce their arrival? Certainly not!

Jesus compared Himself with the coming of a thief. You must understand how sudden and unexpected His judgment of this world is going to be. It is time for you to go out and warn people of a sudden change that is going to come into the world.

There are two ways in which a sudden and unexpected judgment is going to come. One way is to die. Most people are surprised when they die. They are alive one day; then they find they are unable to do what they used to do. I remember a lady who was travelling abroad for a concert. She had bought her plane ticket and had millions of fans lined up for her programs. But she died suddenly in an accident the night before she could leave. She must have been surprised that she was not in the countries she had planned to perform in. She was suddenly in a place where all her plans, purposes and pursuits were no more.

Judgment day will come to every single human being on the earth. The problem is that these dates have not been revealed to us. This is what makes our commission even more urgent. We must rush out there and inform people that judgment day is coming. Judgment day may be very unexpected.

The second way in which sudden and unexpected judgment will come is through the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus will return any day from now. There is enough confusion in the world that warrants the appearance of a Saviour. There are so many volcanoes, wars, earthquakes and rumours of wars, to prove that it may be time for Jesus to return.

Many of the prophecies of Jesus have been fulfilled. No one can tell exactly when Jesus will return. It may be in my lifetime; it may be in yours! The Great Commission according to Peter is to prepare the world for a sudden and abrupt ending to everything.

3. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A COMMISSION TO HASTEN THE COMING OF THE LORD:

The last commission of Peter is to hasten the coming of the Lord. *"Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"* How do you hasten the coming of the Lord? By evangelism! Jesus prophesied that wars, rumours of wars and confusion would not be enough to provoke the coming of the Lord. He said the gospel will be preached to the ends of the world and then the end would come.

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Matthew 24:14

Peter's last words in the last chapter of his last book tell us to hasten the coming of the Lord. Indeed, we are called to hasten the coming of the Lord by preaching with all our strength and with all our might.

Let us go out there and do what we can. Let us plant churches! Let us win souls! Let us snatch the sinners from hell fire! It is the Great Commission. It is our commission! It is Jesus' commission to us!

Let us show Him that we love Him. Let us show Him that we believe in Him. Let us go to the ends of the world. Let us stop preaching about secular things! Let us preach the word of God!

Chapter 14

The Great Commission According to Revelation

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. AND THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, COME. AND LET HIM THAT HEARETH SAY, COME. AND LET HIM THAT IS ATHIRST COME. AND WHOSOEVER WILL, LET HIM TAKE THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: AND IF ANY MAN SHALL TAKE AWAY FROM THE WORDS OF THE BOOK OF THIS PROPHECY, GOD SHALL TAKE AWAY HIS PART OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Revelation 22:12-21

As the Bible closes in its last chapter and its last few words, we hear the Holy Spirit speak. The bride of Jesus Christ is the true church of Jesus Christ. Both the Holy Spirit and the true church say the same thing: Come to God! "Make yourselves saviours of men" is a message from the Holy Spirit.

1. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A LAST WORD FROM THE

HOLY SPIRIT:

It is interesting that the last words in the Book of Revelation are so clear; "Come." As the Book of Revelation closes what are the last words to the world? "COME!" "COME!" "COME!" "COME!"

Come and do what? Come and drink of the water of life freely! Come and enjoy salvation! Come to God! Come to Jesus! These are the words of the Holy Spirit inviting the poor, agonizing, shrieking, screaming, frightened, desperate creatures and souls in this world. Come out of the dark ocean and into the love of God.

2. THE GREAT COMMISSION IS A LAST WORD FROM THE TRUE BRIDE:

The commission of the true church, the words of the true bride of Jesus are clear; COME! COME! COME! COME! The true church is always inviting people to God. The true church is always inviting people to come to Jesus. The false church is always celebrating and having pleasant times with pleasant people on pleasant occasions. The false church has no such message.

The false church says, STAY HERE! SETTLE DOWN! CELEBRATE! PROSPER TODAY! SECURE YOURSELF! ENRICH YOURSELF! MAKE YOURSELF HAPPY!

Today, you must ask yourself, "Are the last words of Jesus important to me?" Are the last words of the Holy Spirit important to you? Did you know that His last words were "COME"?

Are the last words of the true bride important to you? Did you know that the true bride is evangelizing the world and saying to the whole world, COME TO GOD? Did you know that the false bride is saying something completely different? The false bride is saying, "Relax, take it easy, have fun, things are getting better for believers!"

It is time for us to make ourselves saviours of men. It is time to believe the word of God. It is time to set aside the nonsense that is being preached instead of the gospel. The Great Commission must become our passion again! The Great Commission and words of

Jesus must possess our hearts again! Making ourselves saviours of men must be our foremost mission.

In Conclusion

Let us give ourselves to this glorious mission unreservedly. Let us never think that our time, our strength, our families are our own.

Let us dedicate them all to God and to His work. Let us give ourselves wholly that our profiting may appear.

Are we justified in staying here while so many are perishing without means of grace in other lands? We must take every chance of doing good to the lost. We will be labouring, we will be travelling day and night!

We must instruct, we must teach, exhort, rebuke and preach the word.

With all long suffering and an anxious desire for the lost.

We must be instant in prayer for the pouring out of the sweet Holy Spirit upon all the people. Surely, it is worthwhile to push ourselves with all our might in promoting the gospel and the kingdom of our Christ.

Dear friends, God is gracious! Do not run away from Him!

A few more days, and our work down here will be done!

When it's done, it's done for eternity!

Your life spent is irrevocable and it remains to be contemplated through all eternity!

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